

Record

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Lee G. Royce installed as MC president

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

Lee Gardner Royce was inaugurated on the afternoon of March 21 as the 19th president of Baptist-affiliated Mississippi College (MC) in Clinton. "I humbly and with great appreciation and anticipation accept this high honor," Royce told the crowd gathered in the sanctuary of First Church, Clinton.

"I pledge to you my full energy and devotion to this task. I assure you that in the days ahead, we shall work hard, well, and enjoyably," he added.

incivility but rather the ability to state reasons, hear counter arguments, and propose a patient and even tolerant response.

• Third, we must help students develop a capacity for pushing investigation beyond the obvious, discovering many things they don't know and some things they don't wish to know. As we strengthen our Christian witness and encourage our students to follow Christ, they will see that Christ will hold them in whatever inquiry they pursue.

• Fourth, a liberal arts education should help our students cross the received boundaries of knowledge and help students try out new maps of learning, new roads to travel, practicing the art of synergy.

• Finally, I would propose that the liberal arts program of study as well as our professional programs should develop in our students the recognition that the way they express themselves... ought to represent the best of their thinking."

Royce also stressed the importance of maintaining Christ-centered programs and activities at the 177-year-old school.

"What would Mississippi College be if it were simply an old and reputable academic institution? What

Royce was selected president by the school's board of trustees on January 29, 2002. He took over as MC president on July 1, 2002.

He succeeds Howell W. Todd, who retired in 2001 after seven years at the helm of the Clinton-based school.

In his inaugural address, Royce said, "A liberal arts education as an end in itself or as a platform for a professional studies program should inculcate certain academic virtues. Time permits but a cursory perusal of these vital academic virtues.

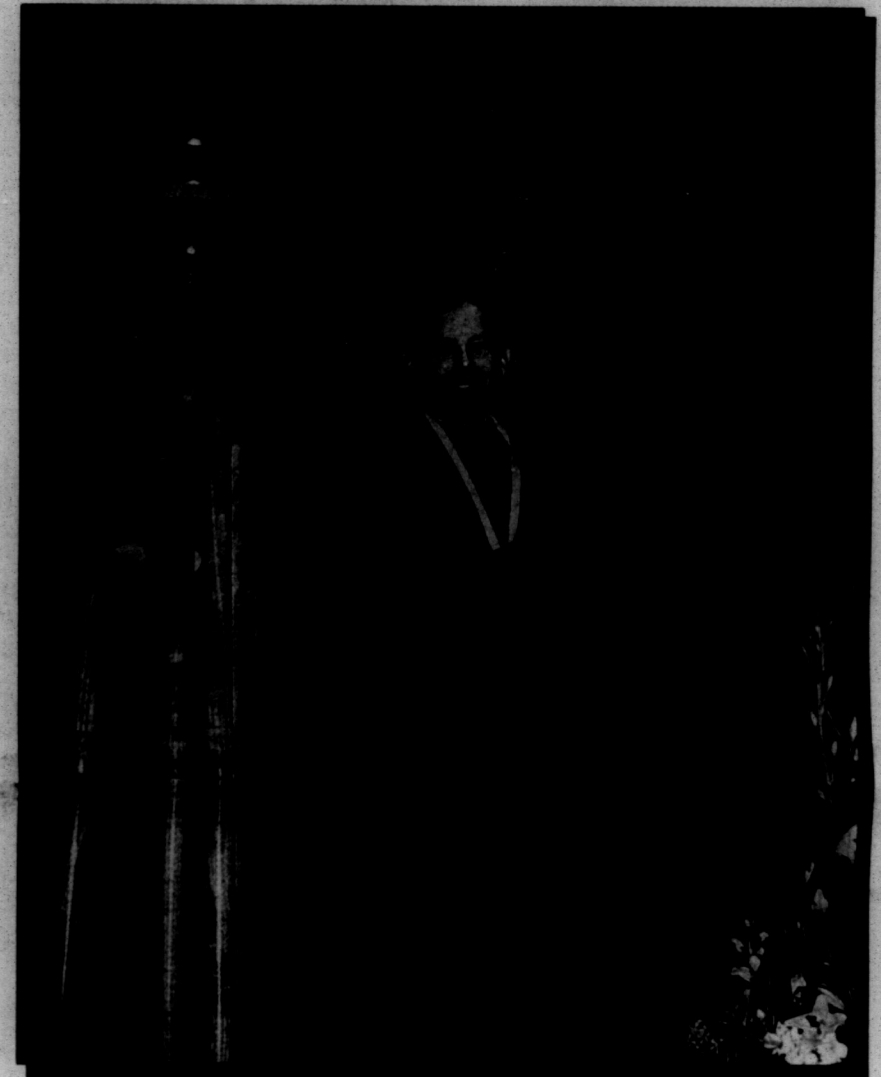
• First, we should help our students develop a capacity for determined inquiry and for intellectual accountability, where no statement is sufficient unto itself but must be open to the hard work of critical reflection and sober cross-examination.

• Second, we should help our students develop the capacity for argument... I do not mean

would it be if it were not committed to its founding principle of Christian higher education and, since 1850, committed to an alliance with the Mississippi Baptist Convention? I submit to you that our one great and enduring distinctive is the combination of a reputable academic program with a powerful and consistent Christian witness that seeks to lead our students to faith in Jesus Christ and to deepen their walk with Him," he said.

"Because we believe in the Christian truths and Christian faith that ought to animate Christian higher education, we insist that our students live in a Christian moral way, and we organize our college life to encourage such moral behavior, both in the things we prohibit and the things we encourage," he pointed out.

"(T)here is only one sure foundation for the future. It is



PRESIDENT INAUGURATED — New Mississippi College (MC) President Lee G. Royce stands beside the ceremonial MC Mace, moments after accepting the Presidential Medallion from Bill Sones, chairman of the MC board of trustees. Royce, the 19th president of the Baptist-affiliated school in Clinton, was inaugurated March 21 in the sanctuary of First Church, Clinton. (BR photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



INAUGURATION CROWD

— A sizeable crowd of academics and other people in the sanctuary of First Church, Clinton, watch as the March 21 inauguration ceremony gets underway for new Mississippi College (MC) President Lee G. Royce. Royce has been on the job at MC since July 1, 2002. (BR photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

the foundation that launched this college and sustained it through so many difficulties and challenges, and it is the place of power and unity for us today. ...I refer to the life, teachings, and everlasting person of Jesus," he said.

Royce closed his inaugural address by pledging, "In the years to come we will see our enrollment grow, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels with new buildings built and some renovated. We will see endowments expand and salaries increase. We will see new programs launched and others expanded.

"May we resolve to fully appreciate and advance our first principles, our early and enduring commitments into the unknown future, knowing that our ultimate foundation and ultimate trust is in the God who holds that future."

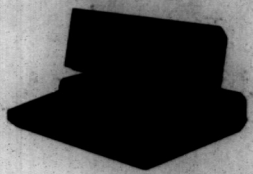
Royce comes to MC from

Baptist-affiliated Anderson College in Anderson, S.C., where he had served as president since 1995. From 1985-95, Royce served as vice-president for university relations at Baptist-affiliated Belmont College in Nashville. Prior to that, he was director of account services for Endata Corporation (1979-85) and served as an instructor in business administration at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Ark.

Royce holds three degrees from Vanderbilt University in Nashville: a bachelor of arts degree with a major in history, a master's degree in business administration, and a doctorate in higher education administration.

Royce is married to the former Rhoda Russell, a native of South Carolina. They have one son, Mark, who is a freshman at Vanderbilt University.

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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Unity, love, loyalty, and solidarity

With the March 19 onset of Operation Iraqi Freedom to drive dictator Saddam Hussein from power in the Middle East, I joined an elite club in which I would have preferred not to hold membership: I became a wartime editor of *The Baptist Record*.

Some of the finest editors of *The Baptist Record* have been wartime editors, and several of the 10 editors of the past experienced combat in various wars and theaters. J.B. Gambrell, who was the first editor of *The Baptist Record* (1877-91) and also helped establish *The Baptist Standard* in Texas, was a Confederate veteran of the Civil War.

(Gambrell also helped found Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth and remains the only four-term president in the history of the Southern Baptist Convention.)

Don McGregor, editor of *The Baptist Record* from 1976-90, spent time in a German prisoner of war camp during World War II. Guy Henderson, editor from 1990-96, was a veteran who continued to serve in the military reserves for many years after his active duty days were completed.

Seeking to discover how past wartime editors reacted to the national crises of their respective eras, I was able to uncover bound volumes of *The Baptist Record* for 1941 and 1942. Of course, that to which we now refer as World War II began on December 7, 1941, with the Japanese Empire's near complete destruction of the United States' Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii.

The Baptist Record was undergoing a major editorial transition in late 1941. P.I. Lipsey's 30 years at the helm of the newspaper was coming to an end, but A.L. Goodrich, the paper's circulation manager, would not succeed Lipsey as editor until early January. It is not clear today just which man was writing editorials for the newspaper during that long-ago transition.

A page one commentary flanked by patriotic songs in the December 11, 1941, issue of *The Baptist Record* reads:

Tragic hours are upon us. No man may speak authoritatively for a Baptist. We would not try. We do dare to say about them, however, that Baptists have been and will be among those at the forefront in defense of home and country, and in the fight for freedom unencumbered, political, and most of all religious. We have not felt as critical as some regarding those who expressed opinions contrary to government leadership. However, the time is upon us when all true Americans may pursue but one course — that course is one of unity, love, loyalty, and solidarity.

The writer then quotes Psalm 20:7: *Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the Name of the Lord our God.*

How inspiring for today are those 61-year-old words! This is the time for unity, love, loyalty, and solidarity — unity of purpose; Christian love for all; loyalty to country and, more importantly, to the cause of Christ; and solidarity to support the troops and for all our critics to see. Finally, it is a time to put our faith not in military power but in the Name of the Lord Our God.

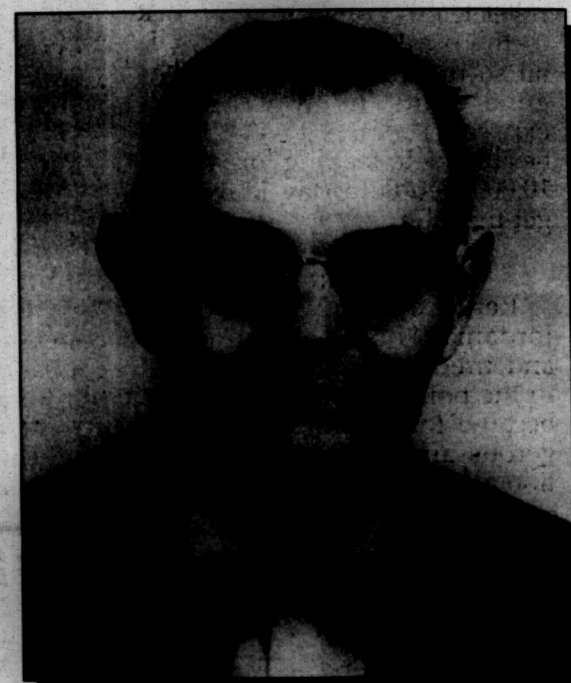
Perhaps the evils of totalitarianism that had descended on so much of the world by 1941 are not as pervasive today. Thankfully, much less of the world is in flames and under jackboot today than in 1941. However, our trust in the Lord should be no less complete than in 1941.

We are not ashamed to be Christians, and we are not ashamed to be Americans. We can be both. Good people can disagree on the war, as noted by the commentator in the 1941 issue of *The Baptist Record*, but now is the time to be sure our Christianity shines through this present darkness.

Another thing: pray, pray, pray.



P.I. Lipsey
Editor, 1912 - 1941



A.L. Goodrich
Editor, 1942 - 1956

PEW POLL RESULTS:

Religion has influence on war opinions

The Pew Research Center and the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life are part of Pew Charitable Trusts of Philadelphia, Pa., established by the children of Sun Oil Company founder Joseph N. Pew and his wife Mary Anderson Pew.

Only 39% of those polled in the Pew survey said they attended religious services of any kind at least once a week. Pew's research did not tell how this specific group viewed the war. Instead, "regular" religious service-goers were defined as those who attended at least "once or twice" a month.

Eighty-eight percent of those polled identified a religious preference of any type

(Christian, Islam, Jewish, etc). Of those with a religious preference, 42% described themselves as "born again or evangelical" Christians. Among the poll's other findings:

- Among evangelical Protestants, which in the poll could have included everything from Baptists to Jehovah's Witnesses, 57% said their pastor has spoken about the war.

- Thirty-seven percent of pastors took no position on the war, 15% supported it, and three percent opposed it.

- Among mainline Protestants, 52% said their clergy addressed the war. Forty-three percent took no position, one percent supported it, and seven percent opposed it.

- Including the entire sample, 77% of the public said that war is sometimes morally justified, compared to 12% who said war is never morally justified.

- Forty-one percent of the entire sample said the media most influences their views on the war. This was followed by personal experience, 16%; education, 11%; religious beliefs, 10%; and friends and family, seven percent.

- Thirty-three percent of all those polled say the opinions of religions leaders have had at least a "great deal" "some" influence on views. Only seven percent said the opinions Hollywood celebrities has had a great deal or some influence.

Baptists ready for refugee flood from Iraq

AMMAN, Jordan (BP) — The war is on in Iraq, and the trickle of hundreds of refugees flowing into Jordan and other neighboring countries could turn into a flood of thousands.

Southern Baptists, Jordanian Baptists, and other evangelicals already are working in refugee camps on Jordan's side of the border just as they did in 1990, and they hope to gain permission to work on the Iraqi side soon. They also hope to feed 10,000 or more people a day if they can gain access to northern Iraq, where the Kurds are suffering increasing hunger.

"We understand that in the Kurdish north is where malnutrition is the biggest, so we're trying to find ways to get in there as quickly as possible," said a Southern Baptist worker in Amman, Jordan's capital. "We would like to have disaster relief teams come in and work in the north. [The situation] is all so dynamic — nothing has gone quite the way anyone expected so far. But we'd like to be able to do feeding for at least 10,000 people a day if we can get there."

AFRAID AND TIRED

Refugees arriving at the Jordanian border are "afraid and tired" after the long drive to the border from Baghdad. It became longer and more dangerous after the main gas station and rest stop on the desert

road was bombed in the early hours of the war.

"It's about a 10-hour ride if you're traveling really fast. A normal ride could be up to 12 hours. Without that refueling stop, it's made things a lot tougher," the worker reported. Once refugees reach the camps, "it's been windy, rainy and cold — and tents are very hard to do much with. The wind has got a lot of sand in it. The situation is just tough for folks who are coming out."

Working with Jordanian Baptists and other evangelical Christians, Southern Baptists are distributing thousands of diapers, baby formula, blankets, and other supplies in border camps. They also intend to relieve hunger and meet medical needs. The International Mission Board (IMB) has allocated \$250,000 to fund aid efforts on both sides of the border.

"Jordan right now is not allowing Iraqis to cross the border," the worker said. "They're only allowing third-country nationals like Egyptians or Sudanese to come into Jordan. There are camps on the other side of the border and we're working one step at a time to get into those. We don't know how many people are in those camps."



SEPTEMBER 1990 — Southern Baptists, Jordanian Baptists, and other evangelical Christians ministered in refugee camps along the Iraqi border during the first Gulf War in 1990, sharing God's love with people who were fleeing hostilities. Although the battle has been joined once again between American and Iraqi troops, the refugee numbers are only a fraction of the numbers seen in 1990. (BP photo)

WAITING TO SEE

More than one million refugees fled into Jordan before and during the first Persian Gulf War, overwhelming the resources of the small nation of about five million people. This time, much depends on whether the anticipated battle of Baghdad ends quickly or becomes a street-to-street shootout with the civilian population caught in the middle.

"The whole refugee situation will hinge on how Baghdad goes, because you're talking about five million people there," the worker said. "I think the whole mood of the region will swing on what happens and the way the Iraqi people respond."

Southern Baptist workers on the scene are asking for medical workers and other types of volunteers to join them and their Jordanian partners.

"We're going to be compassionate through touching their human needs and compassionate through prayer," the worker said. "By touching their need and by prayer, we're praying that God will change the situation."

"As Jesus says in Matthew 25, 'When I was in prison you visited me.' Many of these people have been in a dire situation not unlike prison. So we want to visit them and share with them a cup of cold water in compassion that is moti-

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vated and empowered by prayer. We're asking God to show us the doors that he has already opened up to these people — whether they're Kurds or Turkmen or Shia or Sunni, all across Iraq — so they understand that Jesus loves them and has a personal interest in each one of them."

Editor's note: Contributions may be mailed to Iraq Response, IMB, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230-0767. Make checks payable to IMB and designate "Iraq Response — General Relief." Every dollar given will go 100% to relief ministries. Give online: resources.imb.org/index.cfm/fa/prod/ProdID/961.htm.

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MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE

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Looking back

10 years ago

R. Albert Mohler Jr., a 33-year-old conservative theologian and state Baptist newspaper editor, is approved by trustees of Southern Seminary as the next president of one of the key institutions in Southern Baptist life.

20 years ago

W. Douglas Hudgins, pastor emeritus of First Church, Jackson, and executive secretary emeritus of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, dies in Mississippi Baptist Medical Center. He was 77 years of age. He pastored First Jackson from 1946-69.

50 years ago

First Church, Hattiesburg, enters its new house of worship. The sanctuary is one of the largest colonial structures in the South, seating 1400 in the sanctuary and an equal number in the educational building.

WCC announces record enrollment figures

HATTIESBURG, Miss. (Special) — Spring trimester enrollment at Baptist-affiliated William Carey College (WCC) in Hattiesburg is the highest ever reported at the college, according to WCC President Larry W. Kennedy. A total of 2,401 students registered for spring term classes that began February 24 on the Hattiesburg, Gulfport, and New Orleans campuses.

"Traditionally, we have fewer students

enrolling in the winter and spring terms than we do in the fall," Kennedy said. "However, this current spring enrollment is the highest ever recorded by the college. I attribute this record enrollment to an outstanding faculty that is guiding students to grow in scholarship, leadership and service."

The second highest numbers were set in the fall of 2000, when 2,365 registered for classes. Last year's spring enrollment was 2,311. About 35% of the record total — or 833 students — is attributed to graduate enrollment, including programs in business, education, and psychology on both the Hattiesburg and Gulfport campuses. That number, too, is an all-time high, up from 783 in the spring of last year.

"We're very student friendly," said Tommy King, director of graduate programs and professor of psychology. "The administration at Carey really bends over backward to meet students' academic needs. Also, the state of Mississippi provides incentives for graduate degrees in education, which attracts teachers to our education program."

Both undergraduate and graduate programs in education represent the largest programs at WCC, with about one out of every three students — or 795 students — enrolled in education majors this spring. Those numbers mean that classroom facilities are at a premium.

"We have education classes all over campus, in nearly every building," com-

mented Bitsy Browne Miller, assistant professor and chair of the department of education. "The increase in enrollment has caused lots of growing pains, but it's a great problem to have."

The coast campus, too, has seen a large enrollment increase in the education program. "William Carey College on the Coast is uniquely situated because of a proliferation of many school districts and the desirability of living on the coast," said Gerald Hasselman, director of education and professor of education on the Gulfport campus. "These factors have attracted many students for us in the field of education."

Daniel Caldwell, vice president of church relations and dean of the Cooper School of Missions and Biblical Studies, attributed the increase to increased efforts by faculty and staff.

"Our record enrollment for the spring trimester 2003 was made possible by the efforts of our faculty, administration, staff, and especially the office of admissions," he said. "Everyone has been willing to go the extra mile. It shows that Carey is the affordable college of choice."

Cloyd Ezell, vice president for academic affairs, agreed. "Enrollment has been increasing for the last several years and, no doubt, will continue to increase as more and more students discover that William Carey College is a great place to receive a college education," he said. "We are all very pleased about the record enrollment at William Carey this spring."



CELEBRATING RECORD — Lorena Smith (center), a long-time supporter of William Carey College (WCC) in Hattiesburg, rejoices with WCC President Larry W. Kennedy (right) and his wife Sarah at the news of Carey's all-time high enrollment. The announcement was made at the college's Donor Appreciation Dinner on March 20. (BR special photo)

Iraq's Christians brace for expected persecution

ISTANBUL, Turkey (BP) — In the hours before a U.S.-led war to topple Iraqi President Saddam Hussein began, Iraq's small Christian minority expressed more fears over persecution than American bombs, Compass Direct news service reported March 19.

Iraqi Christians expect to be targeted by a growing tide of Islamic militancy now being encouraged in the secularized Arab state, according to Compass, a news service focusing on persecuted Christians and based in Santa Ana, Calif.

Numbering less than 400,000, Iraq's Christian community has in recent months become the object of overt discrimination by Islamist elements, Compass reported. The attacks have ranged from verbal abuse and graffiti campaigns to stone-throwing and even brutal assassinations.

Iraq's Christian community, one of the oldest in the world, has shrunk from 10% of the population 20 years ago to about 1.5% of the country's 24 million people. The majority of the Christians are Catholic or Orthodox, with several dozen evangelical congregations located mostly in larger urban areas.

Over the past few weeks, local church leaders report that anti-Christian rhetoric has dominated Friday prayer sermons in Baghdad's mosques. "Muhammad said fight the infidels with everything you have," Abu Bakr al-Sammerai declared at the Abdel Qadr al-Gaylani mosque on March 7, according to Compass.

Ignoring the government's previous rules on religious tolerance, other Muslim preachers have urged their listeners to "fight the followers of the devil," openly labeling Christians (known locally as "Nazarenes") as "infidels," Compass reported. On March 13, Iraq's leading Muslim scholars issued a religious edict declaring that anyone who

aided the U.S. and British forces would be "condemned to hell."

"You have some mullahs denouncing the Crusaders and the infidels from the minaret, meaning us, as the Christians here," Chaldean Bishop Shlemon Warduni protested. "The fanatics in Iraq are using it as an excuse to act against the Christians."

Dominated by zealots linked to Saudi Arabia's Wahhabi

Islamic sect, the new breed of Iraqi Islamists have been blamed for a number of incidents and threats of violence across Iraq in the past year.

A Chaldean Catholic nun murdered on Aug. 15 in her convent in central Baghdad had been executed in what local church sources had described as "an Algerian-style Islamist killing."

Church ministers to military families

By Tony Martin
Associate Editor

The eyes of America are on the fighting men and women, the warriors who are involved in operation Iraqi Freedom. In recent days, more and more media coverage has been given to the families left behind, who find themselves without husbands and wives, mothers and fathers. How are they to be ministered to?

For Colonial Heights Church in Jackson, ministering to the families of deployed servicepeople is more than talk.

According to Mark Anderson, pastor of Colonial Heights Church, the church has developed a ministry called, *His Love Endures Forever*. The program encompasses several elements of ministry, from specific times of prayer for service people to an Adopt a Soldier Ministry.

"Joel Jasper, a church member and National Guard member, approached me with the idea of doing something for the families of those deployed," Anderson said. "We felt the need to be sensitive to those families left behind. They have so many needs thrown on them — a lot of them don't have an extended family or support group."

The Adopt a Soldier ministry is just one component of the *His Love Endures Forever* concept. Those who adopt soldiers are encouraged to send cards and "care" packages, as well as helping their families with household issues.

The ministry has three levels: one at which the deployed soldier is prayed for daily by a family; a second which is adoption of a soldier (which includes helping their families left behind); and a third level, in which a Sunday School class helps tend to the responsibilities that would normally fall to the head of the household.

Other components of the overall ministry include community-wide prayer services; other specific times of prayer for service personnel and their families; using yellow ribbons around the church facility and with individuals as a reminder for those committed to praying for soldiers; books on how to talk to children about war and deployment; and candles displayed in the church worship center as a reminder to pray for the nation, her leaders, and troops.

"We're often asked to talk about our faith without sharing the love of Christ," Anderson said, "and we need to take steps to build a bridge to our community. That's why we see this as such a needed ministry."

"We don't know if we'll see any direct influence on, say, the growth of our church," Anderson continued, "but this is a kingdom need that calls for a direct response. Hopefully, it will come to our attention that there's no need to have any doubts or have confidence in God's love."

FLEXIBILITY

More and more we are discovering that flexibility is an important factor in maintaining good health. You and I marvel when we see young gymnasts doing their acrobatics, twisting their bodies around like pretzels and then snapping back to land straight as an arrow. Watching Michael Jordan sail through the air, go through about 14 body shifts, juggle a basketball, and then pitch it into the hoop just makes you marvel over all that flexibility. If you have ever watched a track and field athlete jog down a track towards the high jump bar, leap into the air, twist around, and sail over that bar that you could barely touch — you just have to shake your head in disbelief!

Most of us realize the importance of maintaining good health. We know that we need strong bones. We are also aware of the need of strong muscles to function each day and we also realize the importance of maintaining a healthy heart; but, flexibility just doesn't seem to be at the forefront of our thought pattern on the road to maintaining good health. When we are young, we hardly ever think about being flexible because it comes so naturally. As we get older, we may notice some signs of it disappearing, at least for short periods of time. A good example of that is when we sit in one position for a long time, like riding in a car, and then when we get out we have to go through a series of stretches, twists, and shakes to get the kinks out. The older we get, the more flexibility we lose.

Today, many retirement centers realize the importance of flexibility and now offer their residents a daily routine of low impact, relatively easy exercises to help maintain it. Yet, for the most part, most of us still ignore its importance as it is related to our health. From another viewpoint, and to an even greater degree, it is sad to



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

see that most of us ignore flexibility in our spirits as well. We are often too quickly hardened, calloused, and fixed in our spirits. Listen to what Paul said to the church in Ephesus, "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32). Often Christians tend to focus on the need to forgive, which certainly is a vital part of a healthy, spiritual life, but sometimes overlook the more flexible, gentler approach to life.

Think about what a tremendous difference flexibility could make in a home. Parents need to be firm yet flexible with their children. From time to time, most children will see just how far they can live to the edge of your rules and regulations. They will push the envelope and sometimes push your hot button. Still, it is important to remember that the Scripture says, "Provoke not your children to wrath." Paul was instructing fathers not to stay on their kid's back about everything all the time. Just remember that if you exercise some flexibility with them, they may, in turn, be flexible with you and give you a break when you are inconsistent and inadvertently mess up.

Flexibility is also a wonderful medicine that can cure many marital ills. It is a well known fact that there aren't many perfect husbands running around. Personally, my observation is that there probably aren't more than a handful of us! Therefore, it is important that wives give their husbands a break. On the other hand, there aren't that many perfect, "do everything to please your husband," kinds of wives

either. Most all of us have some interest, activity, habit, or approach to life that irritates our mate, so when we learn to be gentle with each others faults, somehow the celebration of the good qualities is elevated.

It is also a fact that when we exercise flexibility of our spirits in the church, that the kindness we show one to another certainly makes things better. Are there things about your church or someone in the church that just irritates you to no end and keeps your spirit in a slow boil all the time? Could it be that you are irritated by someone's speech pattern, the quality of someone's voice, or the fact that the pastor preaches too long? Are you bothered by some program the church is involved in, or you don't like who the church elected as a deacon? I'm sure the list could fill a page in The Baptist Record. Then, rather than treating these things with gentleness, you harden your spirit and allow it to become sour and permeate everything about you.

In almost every congregation, on any given Sunday, you could take a survey and there probably would be some who thought the music was too loud and others who would want it louder. Some would think the sermon was too long and others would think it needed to be longer and more in-depth. Some would think not enough was being done for the children and young people, and others would think the church was going way overboard in emphasizing youth and chil-

dren's programs. Some would think the temperature was too warm and others would complain that it was too cold. You know, the reality is that everyone is simply expressing their feelings as to how they feel about a certain situation. Simply because the person sitting next to you registers a different opinion than yours, does not mean that you cannot come together, worship together, and experience God together. It does, however, take a spiritual ingredient to allow that to happen and that ingredient is a genuine flexibility that is described in Scripture as being kind to one another.

In the early days of my ministry, I met a 100-year old man. He was not a member of my church, but he was known in the community and I visited him in the hospital. He was not in the hospital because he was sick; he was there because he went for his 100-year checkup. When I arrived, I found him sitting on the side of his bed. As we visited, I asked him to what he attributed his long life. He quickly answered with an answer that he had obviously given many times, "I have never smoked. I have never tasted alcohol. I've never married! But, I guess the thing that really has helped me to live this long is that I have taken care of myself. Mostly I have stayed active." He then reached down, took hold of his leg, picked his foot up and touched his nose with his big toe. He asked me, "Can you do that?" I said, "No sir, I absolutely cannot!" He chuckled and said, "If you really want to live a long, healthy life, you have got to stay flexible."

I left this 100-year old man's room feeling considerably older than my early 20's and I learned a lesson that I would later discover to be most valuable, not only for my physical well-being, but for my emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being. I learned that life can be a lot fuller and healthier if we would just be kinder to each other and exercise flexibility!

Calif. churches supporting U.S. troops

SAN DIEGO (BP) — The first American casualties in Operation Iraqi Freedom were members of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force based at Camp Pendleton near San Diego — and one was a native Mississippian.

Two Marines from Camp Pendleton, Lance Cpl. Jose Gutierrez, 22, of Los Angeles, and 2nd Lt. Therel S. Childers, 30, of Saucier, Miss., were killed March 21 in ground fighting as U.S. and British forces overtook the town of Safwan in southern Iraq and the Persian Gulf port of Umm Qasr en route to Baghdad.

Three other Marines from Camp Pendleton were killed March 21 when their helicopter crashed in Kuwait near the Iraq border: Ryan Beaupre, 30, of St. Anne, Ill., Kendall Damon Waters-Bey, 29, of Baltimore and Brian Kennedy, 25, of Houston.

In reaction to the deaths of local troops, churches in the San Diego and Oceanside communities sought to extend additional prayer and help to military families.

Volunteers from Highland Park Church in San Diego, located three miles from a Camp Pendleton housing complex, hung notes on doors in the community, telling residents of a special morning service at the church March 23. The notes indicated that the church was praying for the troops and would like military families to join them, and directions to the church were included.

At North Hills Church in Oceanside, which meets in an elementary school less than one mile from the back gate of Camp Pendleton, pastor John LeBlanc reported that many of their members are deployed, and the church is trying to keep up the support network for the families left behind. The church obtained addresses for each member overseas and has been corresponding with them and sending care packages filled with requested items.

Texas church prays for soldiers missing in action

EL PASO, Texas (BP) — With word that as many as 12 soldiers from the 507th Maintenance Company from Fort Bliss are missing in action, captured, or killed following an ambush by Iraqi forces on March 23, Southern Baptists and other Christians near the Army post stand ready to minister to the families of those affected.

Pastor Rix W. Tillman of Exciting Immanuel Church in El Paso called his congregation to prayer at 4 p.m. Sunday to intercede for those deployed. "We have a tremendous amount of military people in our church, so there's a very heightened awareness there," he said. "Whenever there's a need we address it."

During fierce fighting near the southern Iraqi town of An Nasiriyah, the Iraqi militia captured the Fort Bliss soldiers. "We've just been praying all day and listening to the news," Maria Cervantes said Sunday night in an interview with the El Paso Times. Families were called to the post Sunday afternoon where they

were told that an officer and chaplain would come to the homes if death notifications had to be made.

Members of the group are a part of the 5th Battalion, 52nd Air Defense Artillery, 11th Air Defense Artillery Brigade that was deployed to Kuwait just over a month ago. Fort Bliss officials reported that the company was "involved in an incident while engaged in maneuvers with the 3rd Infantry Division."

U.S. congressmen from the west Texas and eastern New Mexico region, both with military experience in Vietnam, praised the family support group at Fort Bliss for the manner in which they are addressing a difficult situation.

The U.S. Army Community and Family Support Center, in conjunction with the Army Family Liaison Office, established a toll-free family assistance hotline at (800) 833-6622 to give Army families information, resources and referrals. It is available only to family members of soldiers on active duty and

those in the U.S. Army National Guard and the U.S. Army Reserve who are on active duty.

Iraq war commander Gen. Tommy Franks described the Fort Bliss logistics support troops who were captured as "highly trained" and "highly motivated" following a report on an Arabic television station showing the captured soldiers under interrogation.

The names and faces of some of those captured were broadcast Sunday through interviews with Iraqi television. Major U.S. networks refused to play additional footage of the captured soldiers, showing only still images of prisoners and obscured angles of four bodies.

Fort Bliss spokeswoman Jean Offutt admitted that morale is low at the post. "The mood of course is very tragic. We regret this," she was quoted as saying to the El Paso newspaper. Another soldier stationed there described the reaction as "shock and disbelief" while adding that he is certain the post "will band together."

JUST FOR THE RECORD

Harmony Church, New Albany, held a child dedication service on Feb. 23. Pictured (from left) are Christi and Larry Rape with Cailyn Leigh; Jennifer and Greg Galloway



Harmony Children's Dedication, New Albany

with Dalton; Faye and Kenny Metts with Katie, Marlee, and Kody; and April and Chris Hudson with James Thomas. Robert Daniel is pastor.



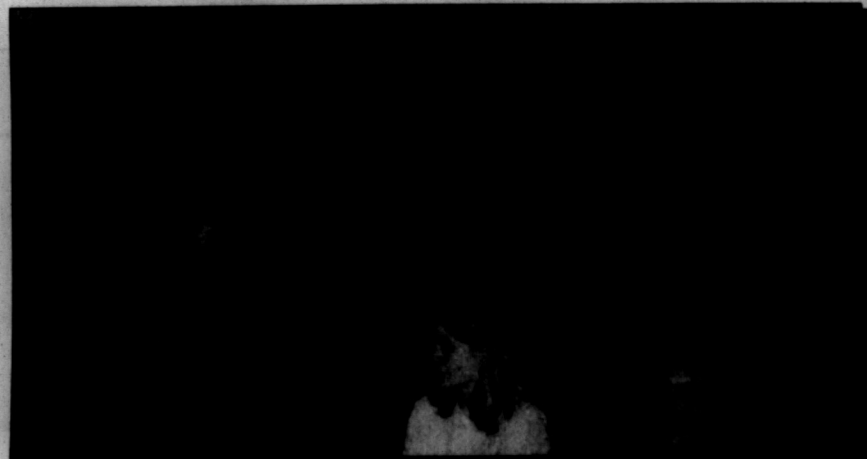
Crowder Church Note Burning, Crowder

Crowder Church, Crowder, held a note burning ceremony on March 9 retiring the debt on their sanctuary. Pictured (from left) are Joan Bailey, Susan Elliot, Joe Meurrier, Cheri Mitchell, Larry Kilgore, interim pastor, and Bobby Shields.

New Life Quartet will be in concert at Wesson Church, Wesson, March 30 at 7 p.m. For more information, call (601) 643-5722. A love offering will be taken.

New Hope Church, Meadville, will offer a marriage seminar on March 31 at 6:30 p.m. Glenn Shows and Dot Day will be speaking. For more information, call (601) 384-5604 or (601) 384-3122.

New Hope Church, Meadville, will feature In His Honor, McComb, on March 30 at 5 p.m. Larry W. Yarber is pastor. For more information, call (601) 384-5604 or (601) 384-3122.



Yalobusha Y-Fest, Yalobusha Association

Heucks Retreat, Brookhaven, will have an auction on April 5 beginning at 6 p.m. Items may be viewed beginning at 5 p.m. Proceeds will go to the church's ministry center.

Y-Fest was held at the Yalobusha County Multipurpose Building, Coffeeville, Feb. 28-March 1. Ryan Fontenot, RAGE Ministries, was the evangelist; Russell McCroy and his band led music; the Ole Miss BSU drama team performed; and athletes from the Ole Miss FCA shared their testimonies. With 400-500 students attending, 26 students accepted Christ.

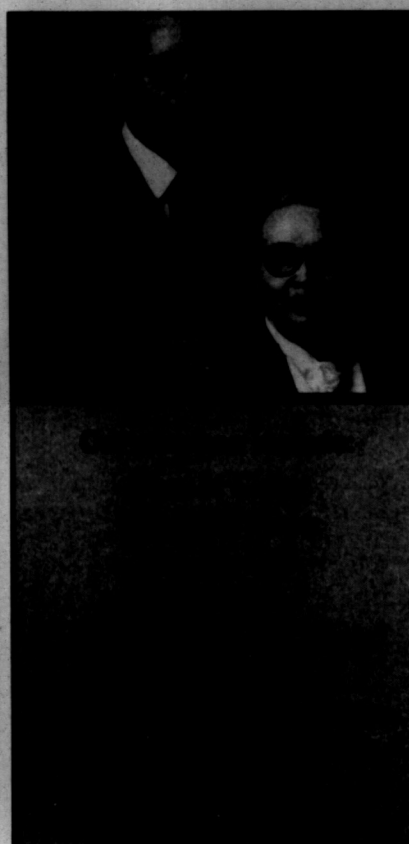
The **Castle Family** will be in concert March 30 at 6 p.m. at Pocahontas Church, Jackson. Admission is free. A love offering will be taken.

Coila Church, Coila, and Black Hawk Church, Black Hawk, will have a joint Fifth Sunday service on March 30, at Coila Church, beginning at 6 p.m. Promised will be in concert and a fellowship will follow. All are invited. Pastors are Billy Blakely, Coila, and Riley Ainsworth, Black Hawk.

Williamsburg, Collins, will have a gospel sing March 30 at 6 p.m. featuring In Favor. A fellowship will follow.

Holy Week Services will be held April 13-20 at **First Church, Laurel**. Services will be held Sundays at normal times, Mon. and Tues. at noon, Wed. and Thurs. at noon and 6 p.m., and Fri. at noon. A complimentary lunch will be served Mon.-Fri. at noon. All are invited to attend.

Janice Church, Brooklyn, recently held a Yard Sale/ Car Wash/Bake Sale to raise money for the American Cancer



Shivers Church Child Dedication, Shivers

Society. The church will also sponsor two teams in the Relay For Life Walk-a-Thon.

Grief Gathering, A Safe Place to Explore Your Personal Grief, will be held on Sundays March 23-May 11 at 4:30 p.m. at First Church, Jackson, Room E-416. For more information, contact (601) 949-1907. This event is sponsored by the senior adult ministry.

First Church, Collinsville, will present the Dallas Holm concert March 31 at 7 p.m. Bring a canned food item to be given to the LBA food pantry. Hal J. Bates is pastor.

Shivers Church, Shivers, held a child dedication on March 2. Pictured (from left, front) are Grace, Bailey, and



Janice Church, Brooklyn

Small Contributions make a Large Difference

Mr. and Mrs. M.F. Duncan have created a lifetime legacy of giving. Mrs. Duncan taught Sunday School for 56 years, worked with WMU, volunteered in the music department and taught Home Economics. Mr. Duncan also shared his time with others and his church by serving as a deacon and church treasurer.

The testimony of their lives may have you thinking they have done their share, but Mr. and Mrs. Duncan wanted to do more. They discovered the Mississippi Baptist Foundation and its Pooled Income Fund. The Duncans learned that even the smallest of contributions can make a large difference when combined with the gifts of other. The Pooled Income Fund gives the Duncans the ability to receive additional income for the rest of their lives and afterwards, have the satisfaction of knowing the money will go to a Baptist cause that they have personally selected.

The Duncans have had their Wills prepared with the Foundation and they have started other trusts and funds. These investments will live far beyond their lifetimes helping foreign missions as well as their local church, McLaurin Heights Baptist Church.

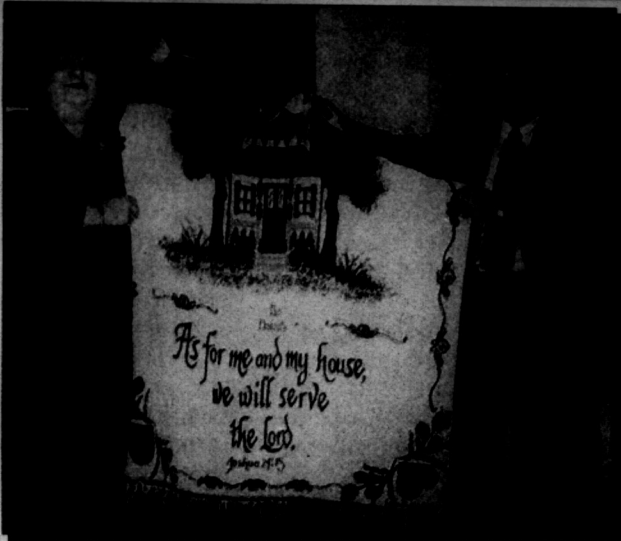
MBF

THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST FOUNDATION

NAMES IN THE NEWS

Harmony Church, New Albany, presented Elaine Keenum with a plaque in appreciation for 17 years of service with The Golden Ages Senior Adult Group on Nov. 10. Pictured (from left) are Robert Daniel, pastor, and Keenum.

Harmony Church, New Albany, presented an afghan to Robert Daniel and his wife on Nov. 10 as his 19th year as pastor. Pictured (from left) are Daniel's wife, and Daniel.



The Daniels

Old Silver Creek Church, Silver Creek, ordained Gabe Martin into the ministry on Dec. 29. Martin currently resides in Washington state. Pictured (from left) are Archie Herrin, Darel Daniels, Martin, and Richard Green.

The 5th Annual Pike County Baptist Association RA Racer Race-Off was held Feb. 22 at West McComb Church, McComb. The 105 boys represented churches from Calvary, Central, East McComb, Fernwood, Friendship, First Magnolia, First McComb, North

McComb, Osyka, South McComb, Unity, and West McComb.

Holly Church, Corinth, recently held a GA celebration service in recognition of the 90 years of girls' missions through the Southern Baptist Convention. Pictured are some of the women who were GAs as young girls and now have children in the children's missions programs. Also pictured is Barbara Smith who taught the older women and now teaches their children.



Holly Church GAs, Corinth



5th Annual Pike Association RA Racer Competition



Robert Daniel & Elaine Keenum



Herrin, Daniels, Martin & Green

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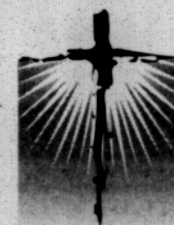
1. Lord, I admit that I need you. *(I have sinned.)*
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. *(I repent.)*
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. *(I believe in Jesus.)*
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him. *(I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)*

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.



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NAMB staffers turn to prayer for war crisis

PRAYERS OVER WAR — North American Mission Board (NAMB) staff, led by NAMB President Robert E. Reccord (kneeling on stage in rear) prayed March 19 for colleagues with family members involved in the Iraq war — as well as others involved in the crisis on all sides. (BP photo by Gibbs Frazier)



ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP — North American Mission Board (NAMB) President Robert E. Reccord led the organization's staff in a special prayer service March 19 for those affected by the imminent war with Iraq — from U.S. military personnel and national leaders to the Iraqi people.

"I'm reminded that as we stand at an opportunity to make a difference, we need to be continually on our face and on our

knees saying, 'Lord, show us what to do,'" Reccord said. "Show us how to do it. For those with whom we partner, do the same and with the leaders of our country, Father, give them wisdom beyond human ability."

Reccord read from 2 Chronicles 20 of Jehoshaphat's prayer during a time of imminent battle. While the circumstances today are different, he said, the Israelites of that time shared the same need for God's guidance and protection.

The leadership of the nation came to God and said they were not equal to the task, Reccord said, and that their only recourse was "to stand humbly before our God," and make the best decisions they can, "and then trust him."

Reccord said he believes President Bush has a similar humility and relationship with God, noting that he begins each day with Scripture and prayer.

During the prayer time NAMB staff gathered around more than a dozen colleagues who have family members involved in the conflict. The meeting followed a special e-mail message March 18 in which Reccord called all staff, missionaries, chaplains and trustees not only to pray intently, but to be open to ministry opportunities.

"As President Bush told our nation Monday evening, war holds no certainties, except the certainty of sacrifice," Reccord said. "In that spirit, I would like to challenge all of us to be especially alert to places we can serve and people to whom we can minister as our nation steps into this conflict."

Reccord encouraged prayer for:

- The nation's troops, as well as the protection and provisions of their families. He also suggested praying that the chaplains and other Christians would be bold in their witness and faith, and that God would use the time of uncertainty to draw thousands of soldiers and their families to Christ.

- Guidance and wisdom for the nation's leaders, including President Bush, his advisers, members of Congress and military leaders.

- The Iraqi people. Pray that God would protect innocent civilians, that Christians would be protected and experience new freedom to share their faith boldly, and that God would draw large numbers of Iraqis to himself, "so they might not only know freedom from an oppressive government, but the ultimate freedom only Christ can give."

- Peace in Jerusalem, including prayer that Israel would not be drawn into the conflict, that greater stability in the Middle East would result, and for other nations in the Middle East.

Also being released March 19 is a series of four public service announcements by Reccord that will air on the FamilyNet television network, a NAMB subsidiary.

The spots offer similar suggestions for prayer, as well as other advice on how to minister during the crisis.

Additional prayer resources will be posted later in the week on NAMB's www.namb.net website.

COLLEGE & SEMINARY NEWS

Daniel Caldwell, Cooper School of Missions and Biblical Studies, and Andrew Dale, a



Daniel Caldwell and Andrew Dale

William Carey College student, are shown during the presentation of the Therman Bryant Memorial Scholarship for academic excellence. The scholarship was awarded by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board of Ministerial Education. Pictured (from left) are Caldwell and Dale.

Arise and Walk, a conference explaining how health care workers can live out the Great Commission in their daily lives, will be held March 29, from 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. at Belhaven College. Jeff Russell, Associate Professor of Sports Medicine and Exercise Science, will be speaking. First Church, Jackson, is supporting this

event. For more information, call (877) 8-KARDIA.

The William Carey College Department of Education is offering education majors who will be student teaching next spring a Start of School (SOS) experience. It allows them to spend five days in a classroom before their college courses begin in the fall. For more information, call (601) 318-6189.

Larissa Parsley, William Carey College, recently presented a science paper entitled The Sequence of Development and the Effects of Varied Growth conditions on Propagule Formation in

Bryophyllum daigremontianum at the Alpha Chi National Convention in Washington, D.C. Alpha Chi is a national honor scholarship society for students who rank in the top ten percent of their class. Parsley will know in late March if she earned a scholarship for her presentation.

The William Carey College Theatre will present Lee Blessing's Two Rooms April 10-12 at 8 p.m. in the O.L. Quave Theatre, Hattiesburg. Seats may be reserved by calling (601) 318-6221. The box office will be open daily from 1 until 4 p.m. beginning April 7.

REVIVALS & HOMECOMINGS

Thirty-eighth Avenue, Hattiesburg: March 30-April 2; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., noon and 7 p.m.; Tues. and Wed., 11:30 a.m., lunch available; John Phillips, Bible conference; William A. Smith, evangelist; for more information, call (601) 264-3897.

Strong Hope, Wesson: March 30-May 2; Let the Fire Fall; Sam Brassell, speaker; Steve Walker, singer; David A. Crowe, pastor.

Main Street, Goodman: March 30-April 2; Sunday, 11 a.m., noon, and 1:15 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Riley Ainsworth, Black Hawk, evangelist; Jan Bunch, music; James H. Garner,

pastor; for more information, call (662) 472-2845.

New Life, Leaf: April 6-11; Tommy Brill, evangelist; Brad Rawls, minister of music; Jerry Rawls, pastor.

Farmhaven, Canton: April 4-6; Fri. and Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, 10:45 a.m., lunch, and 6 p.m.; Gil McKee, Tuscaloosa, Ala., evangelist; Tom Larrimore, Jackson, music; June McKee and Terrie Paulson, instrumentalists; Charles Gentry, pastor.

Belden, Belden: March 30-April 2; Sunday, 8:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., noon and 7 p.m.; Jackie Kay, speaker; Don Baggett, pastor.

First, Lauderdale: March 30-April 2; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Mickey Caison, evangelist; Wayne Bishop, music evangelist; nursery provided.

Unity, Moselle: April 13-18; Sunday, 9:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., lunch, 5 p.m., and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Jamie Coulter, a 36 inch tall man that uses his skateboard to preach, evangelist; Valton Douglas, pastor and music.

Sylvarena, Wesson: March 30-April 2; Sunday, 11 a.m., lunch, 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; John Daniels, Monticello, evangelist; Karen Hardy, Nashville, Tenn., music; Stuart Givens, pastor.

Plainway, Laurel: April 6; Sunday, 11 a.m.; Kent Megehee, former pastor, speaker; dinner on the grounds; J. Nonnie Jefcoat, pastor.

Concord, Yazoo City: March 30-April 2; Sunday, 11 a.m., covered dish meal, afternoon service; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Harold Bryson, Mississippi College, evangelist; Billy Causey, First, Raymond, music; James F. Yates, pastor; for more information, call (662) 746-2540.

Morgantown, Natchez: March 30-April 3; Sunday, 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Thurs., 11:45 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Gene Douglas, speaker; Craig Forque, music.

NEVER PAID

Editor:

Your editorial in the March 15 issue of The Baptist Record entitled, Alcohol's awful price, paid in full, was a timely article. The price is awful high, staggering, or any one of a number of descriptive words, but the price is never completely paid in full. Installments are paid in perpetuity by alcohol's victims.

Gulfport police arrested almost 800 people for driving under the influence of alcohol (DUI) in 2002. There is no way to calculate how many were not caught. It is frightening to know that a casual drive along the city streets may bring an encounter with a driver under the influence of alcohol. Other cities have similar statistics and concerns.

It is onerous to me that the State of Mississippi, through the Alcohol Beverage Commission (ABC), had made me an unwilling partner in the wholesale liquor business. All liquor sold to retail merchants must be bought through ABC. The arrival of casinos has increased the flow of alcohol that helps the gambler lose more money. Liquor stores have increased in number, indicating an increased flow of alcohol in the general population. In one ten-year period, 50,000 Americans lost their lives in an unpopular war. In the

same ten-year period, 250,000 people were killed on America's highways from the effects of alcohol on drivers.

Indeed, installments on alcohol's price are paid in perpetuity by its victims. Will we ever learn? Has the false promise of tax revenue for schools obscured our vision?

V. Afton Anderson
Biloxi

PATH TO CREEDALISM?

Editor:

It should sadden all of us that missionaries such as David and Robin Parks Johnson, whose work has been exemplary for the past 17 years, are now deemed "unacceptable" for funding by the International Mission Board because they cannot, in good conscience, sign the affirmation of the Baptist Faith and Message (BFM) 2000.

Who shall be "required" to sign next? Seminary professors, pastors, individual Christians? Are we running down the path of creedalism that Baptists have always abhorred?

Compared to the BFM 1963, the BFM 2000 has many changes. I have listed four of the more discouraging changes:

- Soul Competency and the Priesthood of the Believer have

been changed from an individual (singular) to a group (plural), thus diminishing the individual's relationship with God and minimizing a historical Baptist position.

- "The Criterion by which the Bible is to be interpreted is Jesus Christ," has been removed from the article on Scripture. Removal of a Christ-centered interpretation elevates the Bible above Jesus Christ. What about John 5:39?

- Wives to submit gracefully to their husbands, in the article on Family, does not accurately put forth the intent of our relationships as identified in Ephesians 5:21-33.

- The Lord's Day article has been given a more secular definition.

No evident good has come from the recent changes to the BFM. Quite the contrary, I have read and heard only negatives associated with the changes. That should tell us something, shouldn't it? Is it of God or man?

Bill Zerfoss
Gautier

HAPPY TO SIGN

Editor:

Many letters to the editor have been written for some time now, pro and con, concerning the Baptist Faith and Message

(BFM). A few missionaries have resigned, rather than sign the BFM. They say that they cannot accept the BFM with a good conscience. One thing that I am missing in these comments is, with which parts of the BFM do they disagree? I read again my copy of the BFM and I would be happy to sign it. I would not mind signing it annually, if need be.

James K. Burke
Tylertown

USE EVANGELISTS

Editor:

I would like to commend Sonny Adkins, Evangelism Director for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB), for the outstanding State Evangelism Conference at Harrisburg Church, Tupelo, on January 27-28. At the conference, it was my privilege to hear two of our state vocational evangelists preach wonderful messages and others lead us in praise and worship. I also met several of our fine Mississippi vocational evangelists at the conference.

Let me make an appeal to our pastors and churches to pray about using our vocational evangelists in revival meetings. The office of the evangelist is a God-ordained position that in His sovereignty He uses to accomplish His work in and through local churches. In the churches that I have pastored the past 30 years, we have used vocational evangelists during most revival meetings. All have been good experiences. We have seen many people saved. The church has been blessed and real revival has taken place.

May I recommend that you consider vocational evangelists to preach and lead worship in your meetings in the future? You may obtain a list of Mississippi vocational evangelists by contacting our MBCB Evangelism Department at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3278 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 278.

Malcolm R. Lewis, pastor
Northcrest Church, Meridian



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.

Cal Baptist students get civics lesson

RIVERSIDE, Calif. (BP) — California Baptist University students recently received a civics lesson in debate, war, and government when their student government passed a resolution in support of the war against Iraq. One day later, the student body's judicial court ruled it unconstitutional — at least, unconstitutional according to the student government's constitutional and bylaws.

"We just felt that in these times it would be a great way to show our encouragement and support to our president and our troops," said student body president Dustin Hobbs, age 22, one of the resolution's supporters. "[We believed] it would be a constructive way to do that."

The school's student government is a parallel of the U.S. government, with an executive council, senate and judicial board serving as a sort of checks and balances. The resolution was born when the executive committee, headed by Hobbs, authored and passed by a 5-0 vote a resolution supporting President Bush, the Iraqi policy and military personnel.

On March 17 the senate debated the resolution more than 90 minutes before passing it 12-10. On March 18, the school's judicial board ruled it unconstitutional, saying that "this type of political advocacy is not the intention of the formation of the student government."

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FULL-TIME MUSIC/YOUTH MINISTER needed. Send resume with references to: Calvary Baptist Church, Music Search Committee, P.O. Box 543, Butler, AL 36904.

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SLAYDEN BAPTIST CHURCH, SLAYDEN, Miss. (Marshall Association) is seeking an interim Music/Worship leader. Please contact the church office at (662) 252-4559.

THE LEE COUNTY BAPTIST Association is now accepting resumes for the Associational Missions Director (AMD). Please send resumes to: Lee County Baptist Association, c/o Administrative Committee, Post Office Box 2640, Tupelo, MS 38803.

ACKERMAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Ackerman, Miss. is seeking a summer youth director. Please send resumes c/o personnel committee, Ackerman Baptist Church, P.O. Box 277, Ackerman, MS 39735.

TRACE RIDGE BAPTIST CHURCH accepting

resumes for bi-vocational minister of music. Forward resumes to search committee, P.O. Box 2726, Ridgeland, MS 39158-2726.

MINISTER OF RECREATION AND COLLEGE. Trinity Baptist Church of Southaven is seeking a full-time minister to lead in their sports, recreation, and college ministries. Send resumes to Dr. Jim Butler, 7200 Swinnea, Southaven, MS 38671.

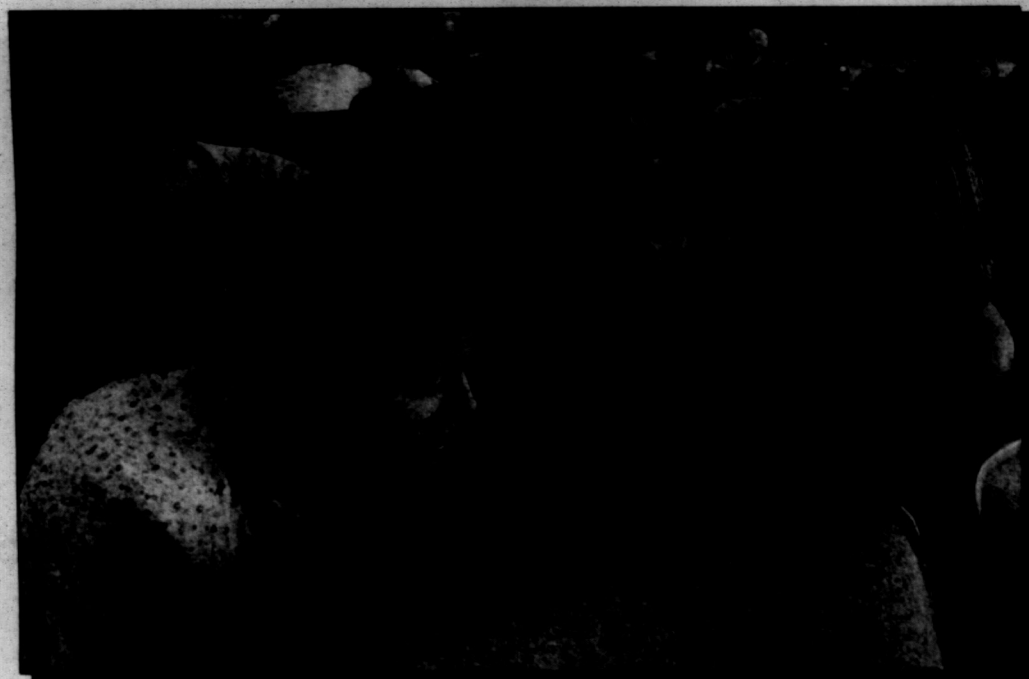
MINISTER OF HIGH SCHOOL students. Trinity Baptist Church is seeking a full-time high school student minister. He will be responsible for the total ministry of grades 9-12. At present the attendance in this group is 100 students. Send resume to Dr. Jim Butler, 7200 Swinnea, Southaven, MS 38671.

Churches download war videos

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — More than 7,000 churches have downloaded two free videos about the war in Iraq for use during worship services, prayer meetings and as sermon illustrations. The Southern Baptist North American Mission Board (NAMB) produced the two-minute video segments which are available from the NAMB website, www.namb.net/essentials.

Download times vary significantly by the type of Internet connection available. "Churches with high-speed access such as T1, cable or DSL should be able to download the video clips in a few minutes, while dial-up connections could take as much as an hour or more," Keeseey said. Once downloaded, the video files can easily be inserted into any PowerPoint presentation. Directions for doing that are available on the website.

In order to provide a timely response, Keeseey said, videos are only available by free download from the Internet. Due to shipping costs and delivery times, NAMB is unable to provide them on VHS or DVD at this time.



UNITING IN PRAYER — More than 1,000 Union University students in Jackson, Tenn., gathered March 19 to pray, including (from left) freshmen nursing students Ashley Goodin, Brittany Hill and Crystal Box at the Tennessee Baptist-affiliated university. (BP photo by Jim Veneman)

Iraq campaign 'last resort,' SBC leaders say

WASHINGTON (BP) — United States air strikes targeting Saddam Hussein early March 20 in Baghdad launched a military campaign that Southern Baptist leaders called a "last resort."

The U.S. attack — surprising in its nature — came at about 5:30 a.m. Baghdad time with the use of missiles and bombs in an effort to take out Hussein, thereby removing the head of the Iraqi regime and hopefully minimizing the length and casualties of war.

U.S. authorities were uncertain of their success, leaving open the possibility one of the dictator's body doubles actually appeared on Iraqi TV after the initial military action.

The attack began about 90 minutes after the arrival of the 48-hour deadline President Bush had given Hussein and his sons to leave the country.

Speaking from the White House about 45 minutes after the strikes began, Bush said U.S. and coalition forces were "in the early stages of military operations to disarm Iraq, to free its people and to defend the world from grave danger."

"Now that conflict has come, the only way to limit its duration is to apply decisive force, the president said, "and I assure you, this will not be a campaign of half measures, and we will accept no outcome but victory."

Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) President Jack Graham and ethics leader Richard Land both described the military effort as a "last resort" and called for prayer.

"Removing Saddam Hussein from power is a just and necessary action after 12 years of lies and deception," Graham said in a written statement. "This war is 'just' because its cause is liberation not occupation, protection not aggression, peace not appeasement."

Graham, pastor of the Dallas-area Prestonwood Church, said he, "along with millions of Southern Baptists, support our president's decision."

Recalling the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, Graham said, "America will continue to respond to threats of evil with courageous resolve. Southern Baptists will embrace and engage this global challenge with faith and renewed commitment to evangelism and missions."

We will unite in prayer and faith."

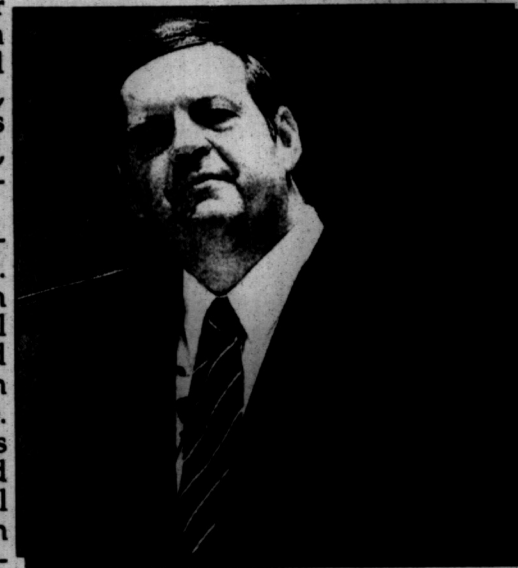
Land, president of the SBC's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) in Nashville, said the United States and its coalition allies "have been waiting 12 years for Saddam Hussein to abide by the civilized world's demand that he dispossess himself of his weapons of mass destruction. He has consistently and relentlessly refused to do so. Finally, we come to a moment of last resort, and the United States is now leading a coalition of more than 40 nations from around the world that have not only perceived the danger but have the courage of their convictions to act upon them and disarm Saddam Hussein and liberate the Iraqi people."

"We should pray for all the soldiers, sailors and airmen involved in the liberation of Iraq and their families, as well as the Iraqi people," Land said.

Graham called for pastors and churches "to designate days of prayer and fasting." He also encouraged families to "join together in personal and private intercession."

Southern Baptists "will enlist prayer warriors as special forces to pray for our troops and their families," Graham said. "We pray for peace and the possibility of a better world where tyranny and terrorism are eliminated."

"We remember our chaplains who are ministering God's grace and strength," he said. "We pray for the Iraqi people and the people of the Middle East that there will be a minimum of bloodshed. We pray for revival and spiritual awakening in our beloved nation. We ask God for protection from terrorism at home and abroad. In these urgent of days we will seize the opportunity to advance the kingdom of God by sharing the message of Jesus and his love."



Land

Graham

Southern Baptists gather to pray as war flares

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — The start of war with Iraq coincided with the midweek prayer services March 19 in numerous Southern Baptist churches across the country.

others called to military service in Operation Iraqi Freedom during the church's midweek prayer service. A total of 28 names were read aloud.

After a brief period of silent prayer, Daniels led the group in praying for protection for those involved in the deployment, as well as for America, Christians across the world and President Bush. Daniels asked that God allow the families affected by the war to have "an abundance of peace."

"Grant wisdom to all those in power," Daniels prayed. "We ask that you create a miracle, that you would be glorified in all this. May you always see our nation as one nation under God."

Two Rivers Church, Nashville, Tenn.: A special hour-long prayer service was held in response to the military action in Iraq. As people entered the worship center, they were given a slip of paper with one name, branch of service and location of about 75 men and women in the military with connections to Two Rivers.

With hundreds of people in attendance at the prayer service, each military name was distributed several times so that more than one person could be in prayer for each one.

At one point, the congregation was given permission to use their cell phones in church. Each person with a cell phone who knew of a friend with someone away at war was asked to stand up and call that person while a small group gathered around in the worship center to pray for the specific loved one.

The service ended with the congregation getting on their knees to voice personal prayers to God for the military, the nation's leaders, the Iraqi people and America.

• Van Buren Church, Louisville, Ky.: "Thank you, God, for our soldiers," 5-year-old Alex Beck prayed Wednesday night. Alex's father, Peter, the church's pastor, recounted that Alex "understood what the psalmist meant when he wrote, 'Some boast in chariots and some in horses, but we will boast in the name of the Lord, our God' (Psalm 20:7). Alex knows that our soldiers are fighting to protect America from some very bad people and that some may die, including his uncle. But, more

importantly, this little boy knows that it is God who controls the battlefield. And he's glad." Peter Beck also is director of marketing at Southern Seminary and a master of divinity student.

Citing Acts 12, Parkland Hills pastor Mark Swan told church members to expect that God will work mightily through their prayers. "We don't need to have a cockiness, but there needs to be a faithful expectation that God will answer our prayer," Swan said.

• First Baptist Church, Brandon, Fla.: Tommy Green, Florida Baptist State Convention president, in leading his congregation's time of intercession, prayed: "The decisions rendered by the leaders of our nation have been weighed in the balance in the closet of prayer. We stand in absolute support of our leaders, military personnel and their families. Our prayer is for protection, precision and for peace. The scriptural mandate is: 'blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord,' [which] teaches us of privilege and responsibility. May God bless the United States of America, and may the heart of our nation be turned to the Lord."

292-3390.

So. Baptist chaplains ready for war, again

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — 1st Lt. Virgil Thomas is battle-ready, but he fights only with the sword of the Spirit. A battalion chaplain with the U.S. Army's 4th Infantry Division at Fort Hood, Texas, Thomas has received deployment overseas with the remainder of the division and may soon see combat in Iraq.

A recent graduate of Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, Thomas answered the call to military chaplaincy out of his desire to fulfill his duty as an American citizen and a Southern Baptist.

Today he ministers to soldiers from diverse religious backgrounds. Chaplaincy in a multi-faith setting is challenging, Thomas said, and the challenges only increase in wartime.

"I am faced with soldiers of varying faiths as well as those who want nothing to do with religion," he said, "but they want the hope that there is something more, and that is when I can tell them about Christ."

That is precisely the mission of Southern Baptist chaplains, noted Chaplain Brig. Gen.

James Spivey, former U.S. Army assistant chief of chaplains and a professor of church history at Southwestern Seminary.

Spivey said graduates from Southwestern and the five other Southern Baptist seminaries who enter the chaplaincy are to be Southern Baptist ministers in uniform, committed to ministering and evangelizing in a military framework. Opportunities for evangelism occur when chaplains are fulfilling their charge, characterized by their motto. "The mission of the military chaplain is threefold: 'nurture the living, care for the wounded, and honor the dead,'" Spivey explained.

Numerous alumni from Southwestern, for example, are fulfilling that role. Maj. Rick Morrow, a chaplain with the U.S. Army Special Operations Command in Fort Bragg, N.C., was in Afghanistan when several Green Berets were killed in combat earlier this year.



PRAYING FOR PEACE — Cmdr. Doyle W. Dunn (left), chaplain aboard the USS Harry S. Truman, leads sailors and Marines in a prayer following news that the United States officially commenced combat over Iraq. Dunn voiced his prayer from the bridge aboard the aircraft carrier in the Mediterranean. (Photo courtesy of U. S. Navy)

1st Lt. Charles Seligman, now an Air Force Special Operations Command chaplain in Florida, ministered to airmen and families from Hurlburt Field after plane crashes in Puerto Rico and Afghanistan.

Navy Chaplain Lt. Leemon Brown serves at Camp Lejeune, N.C. Army Chaplain 2nd Lt. Josh Llano serves at Fort Benning, Ga. Navy Lt. j.g. Robert Moore serves in La Maddalena, Italy.

Beyond serving as Southern Baptist ministers and counselors in uniform, military chaplains also have a constitutional duty to facilitate the free exercise of religion.

"Chaplains exist for freedom of religion in the military. It is my job as a chaplain to guarantee that right for every service member and their families. I provide ministry to those of like faith. For those of a different faith I provide for ministry. For example, I would not conduct a Muslim service, but it is my duty to find an imam that can," Seligman said.

Providing ministry for others, however, often allows chaplains the opportunity to share their faith in Christ, Seligman said.

Such was the case with a Wiccan he was able to lead to Christ. "Accommodating them in their beliefs provides us inroads," he said.

Lt. Scott Callaham, a Naval Academy graduate now pursuing a Ph.D. at Southwestern Seminary, agreed.

Callaham, who noted that service as a chaplain provides "immediate acceptance" in every situation and "injects every moment with eternal significance," served as a submariner before becoming a chaplain. God called him out of the "silent service" and today he serves as a reserve chaplain with Marine Air Logistics Squadron 41 at the Joint Reserve Naval Air Station in Fort Worth.

Thomas, Seligman, and Callaham are only a few of the more than 1,000 alumni of Southwestern Seminary who have chosen to serve God through military chaplaincy since the seminary was founded in 1908. During World War II alone, 557 Southwestern Seminary alumni and students served as chaplains and in other capacities. Nine were killed in the European and the Pacific theatres.



READY TO GO — First Lt. Virgil Thomas, battalion chaplain with the U.S. Army's 4th Infantry Division at Fort Hood, Texas, and a graduate of Southwestern Seminary in Ft. Worth, is battle-ready and prepared for ministry in a multi-faith military unit. (BP photo by Richard D. McCormack)

Bibliocipher

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OLOQ GY RZO YHQ HB

UGQ XGUO QHR RH

WO UEQEYROJOS NQRH,

WNR RH UEQEYROJ, GQS

RH DELO ZEY VEBO G

JGQYHU BHJ UGQI.

UGRRZOF RFOQRI:

RFOQRIOEDZR.

Clue: I=Y

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Mark 4:30.

Chaplains urge churches to support soldiers

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — With loved ones thousands of miles away on an aircraft carrier or camping in the desert, families of U.S. forces are facing more than their share of stress these days. While the military offers much help, many opportunities for churches remain for ministering to families both within and without their congregations.

Several Southern Baptist chaplains said the needs are particularly significant for families of National Guard and Reserve soldiers who often are far from their bases and unaccustomed to the pressures of extended separation and other stresses on families.

"Churches are doing everything from potentially having particular members saying, 'We'll keep your kids for a little while to prayer support,'" said

Maj. Mickey Foxworth, garrison chaplain for Hunter Army Airfield at Fort Stewart, Ga.

"We've got several families where the wife may be pregnant and they need someone to drive," Foxworth also noted.

"There's a sense of being overwhelmed," Foxworth said, "and when you're overwhelmed you find it hard to reach out for help."

While churches can call chaplains' offices directly to offer help, he suggested working together through a single point of contact like a Baptist associational director of missions.

Dave Mullis, the North American Mission Board (NAMB) military chaplaincy associate, suggested additional ministry opportunities for churches. Among them:

- Churches should know details of military affiliations of

their members so they can be ready to assist, particularly in the case of death of one or more family members.

- While support groups might be helpful for military families, they should be focused on positive activities such as games, movies, craft activities or picnics. "These are not therapy groups," Mullis said. "Group leadership should be alert to persons having difficulties and know to whom they might refer the person for specialized care or counseling."

- Repair assistance. "The joking phrase among military families is that as soon as the unit deploys the car or washing machine will break," he said.

- Financial assistance may be needed, particularly when income suffers with the deployment of Guard and Reserve forces, but the answer is not

always money. "A financial counselor who not only helps organize the finances but can intervene with creditors is helpful."

- Adopt-a-family ministries work well, especially in the context of Bible study groups. "Prayer support, phone calls, child care, shared delivery of children to various activities, cards, yard and house maintenance are meaningful outreach tools," Mullis said.

- "Care" packages from home to service members not only uplift the recipient but "speak loudly to their buddies in the unit," he said. Video and audio tapes of services or cards and drawings from children's activities are meaningful.

Editor's note: Ideas on how to minister to families of servicemen and women are available at www.lifeway.com/conflict.